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ABSTRACT

This career exploration instructional booklet on the chef's occupation is one of several resulting from the rural southwestern Colorado CEPAC Project (Career Education Process of Attitude Change). Based on a job analysis and utilizing a programed instructional format, the following content is included: A brief description of a chef's job responsibilities; 10 questions regarding real situations that a chef may experience while working; and answers to the questions so students can check their understanding of each job situation. The names and addresses of resources that can be consulted for additional information are included. (EM)

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C H E F

Occupational Simulation Kit

Career Education-
Process of Attitude Change

San Juan Basin Area
Vocational-Technical School
Cortez Colorado

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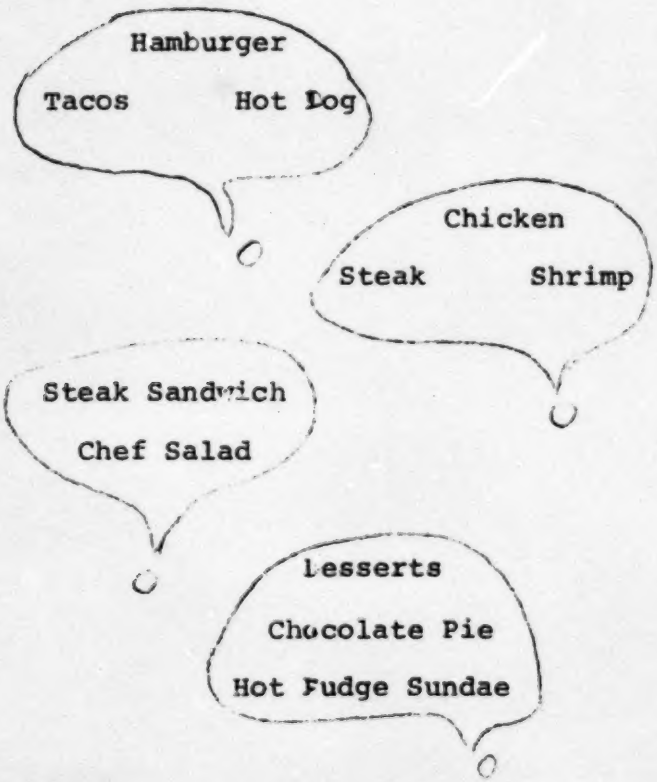
Have you ever had difficulty deciding what to order from the menu in a restaurant? What will taste good today? What can I afford? What will give me the most food - I'm hungry! Should I try something different?



Who is really responsible for that menu and the food that is served? The chef makes up the menus, perfects recipes and supervises the cooking of the food. Is that all a chef does?

The chef is responsible for the kitchen and all the staff as well as the dining room. Of course he can't personally handle every plate of food, but he must train and supervise others to do a good job.

Who are chefs? Are they men or women? What kind of attitudes and characterists would a person need to be a good chef?

Let's meet some of the experiences that the chef will meet each day. As you read through the kit you'll have a chance to answer questions to check your understanding.

Use the answer sheet from the kit to answer the following questions.

Question 1

Several customers were loudly discussing a plate of food with a waitress. It seemed that something was wrong with it. Who is responsible for the mistake?

a. The waitress is responsible because she served a poor plate of food to the customers.

b. The cook is responsible because he prepared a poor plate of food.

c. The chef is responsible because he failed to supervise his kitchen staff in such a way that a poor plate of food couldn't be served.

d. The owner of the restaurant because he should be in the kitchen all the time.

Answer (c) is correct. The chef is in charge of the kitchen operation. It is now up to the chef to find out how the operation can be improved.

In the kitchen the chef decides what food and equipment to order. He must decide how much and what quality of food. Often meat is bought uncut, such as a side of beef or whole pork.

Question 2

The chef must know how to cut meat. This may appear surprising however, the chef must be knowledgeable. Which reason below is the best reason for learning to cut meat correctly?

a. A chef must buy good cuts of meat. For this reason he must know how it is cut.

b. A chef likes to cut his own meat in order to help the exact type of meal that he desires to make.

c. A chef must know whether a cook is cutting meat correctly.

d. A chef has to know the names of meat cuts in order to prepare a menu.

Answer (b) is correct. An expert chef will have his own unique ideas as to how to best cut meat so that it will taste best and look the best.

In managing the kitchen the chef must have a good understanding of mathematics and business. He must price foods on the menu so that there is a profit on each plate over the kitchen and dining room expense.

Question 3

A chef must learn about many subjects in order to do his job well. Why must he know mathematics?

a. A chef has to determine the prices placed on menus.

b. The chef must check on the addition of his waiters and waitresses.

c. The chef must be able to check bills sent to the restaurant by wholesale companies.

d. A chef must be able to buy food, store food, price food, use food, and prepare food so that the restaurant will make a profit.

Answer (d) is correct. A chef must be able to figure in advance as well as do his bookkeeping.

The decor of a restaurant is often the responsibility of the chef. What atmosphere is wanted? How should the tables be set? Enjoyment in dining isn't only the taste of the food, but also the attractiveness of all the surroundings, the cleanliness, the waitresses, the table, lighting, the plates, and the general decor.

Question 4

Which of the following table settings would be most fitting for an evening dinner-type restaurant?

a. Place mats, paper cups in plastic holders, paper napkins, flatware.

b. Place mats, drinking glasses, paper napkins, flatware, coffee cups and saucers.

c. Table cloths, cloth napkins in napkin rings, glass goblets, flatware.

d. Cloth napkins, placemats, drinking glasses and flatware.

Answer (c) is correct. This type of table setting adds much class to the restaurant and meal.

The chef is a teacher. He must train kitchen and dining room personnel. When the people are well-trained, then the chef merely needs to supervise and keep up with all new methods, etc.

Question 5

Which duties would a chef feel as most important?

a. The organization, supervision, instruction of kitchen and dining room personnel.

b. Ordering food, storing food, and making the best use of food.

c. Checking on the waiters and waitresses to make certain that customers get good service.

d. The preparation of a sound budget so that a profit is assured.

Answer (a) is correct. If the kitchen personnel are well organized, supervised, and instructed, all other duties would be included.

Question 6

One waitress seems to be very slow in serving customers. She works but wastes time. What is the chef's course of action?

a. Observe her work, plan for improvement, show her how to improve.

b. Dismiss her; hire a more qualified waitress.

c. Tell her to stop wasting time and get busy.

d. Give her fewer customers to serve.

Answer (a) is correct. Supervision of waitresses is part of a chef's job.

The development of a menu comes about after you've decided whether you've a specialty house or are trying to offer what the community desires. A varying price range is desirable in most instances.

Question 7

How does a chef decide just what to include on his menu?

a. He looks for the cheapest, good foods and plans his menu from this list.

b. He studies his potential customers to determine their tastes. He plans meals to satisfy his customers. He develops a menu with a variety of meals.

c. He prepares expensive foods so that the customers will have something special.

Answer (b) is correct. A good chef should satisfy his customers by preparing food that they enjoy.

The kitchen of a large restaurant usually has specialized people such as pastry chef, fry cook, baker, dinner cook, breakfast cook and others.

Question 8

The meat cook complains about having too many cuts of meat to prepare. What should the chef do?

a. Tell him to do his job and stop complaining.

b. Explain the reason for the many cuts of meat.

c. Check out the daily record of meat orders from customers in order to decide whether or not a change should be made.

d. Cut down the number of meat cuts.

Answer (c) is correct. The chef is a manager; he must make wise choices based on research.

The chef of a successful restaurant must be constantly looking for new ideas and listening to the people. He must be interested in people and desire to please them.

Question 9

The chef has learned that several families of different nationalities have started to eat in his restaurant. What is his responsibility?

a. Develop a menu that gives his meals a more international appearance.

b. Order waitresses to tell customers about the good menu meals.

c. Provide more "specials" to encourage business.

d. Create new recipes and add a variety of international foods to the menu.

Answer (d) is correct. A chef is a master of food preparation. He must be willing to create new recipes.

Safety and clenliness are very important in any kitchen. In a large restaurant kitchen it is very important that everyone observe rules of safety and cleanliness. Each state has standards and regulations which must be observed.

Question 10

A new chef observes that too many accidents occur in his kitchen. What should he do next?

a. He should increase the amount of accident insurance for his employees.

b. He should post a safety checklist and show a safety film. A speaker should also be invited to speak to employees.

c. He should change the organization of kitchen work and give each employee a more appropriate job.

d. He should buy many new pieces of equipment.

Answer (c) would be correct. A kitchen staff should be carefully organized no matter how much insurance, new equipment, or safety campaigns that you may have. Much of the equipment in a kitchen can be hazardous and should be used in the best situation possible. Each kitchen worker should have his own area in which to work.

Question 11

The chef has just received a new complex micro-wave oven. It is installed and ready to use. What would be best for him to do?

a. He should order his cooks to begin using it immediately.

b. He should use it himself and keep everyone else away from it.

c. He should conduct a class on its use and instruct his cooks.

d. He should wait until he changes his menu.

Answer (c) is correct. It is important to teach all cooks on the use of a new complex oven.

During your training to become a chef, you would have spent time in each food preparation area such as frying, baking, broiling, vegetables, soups, etc. You also would learn the care and use of kitchen equipment, selecting and storage of food, planning menus, sanitation, buying foods.

Question 12

If you were a new chef having just finished culinary school or apprenticeship, would you likely: (choose the 2 best answers)

a. Become a head chef getting $25,000.

b. Work as a cook in a large restaurant.

c. Work as a chef in a small restaurant.

d. Start as a dishwasher in a restaurant.

e. Become a soda jerk.

Answers (b) and (c) would be likely beginning positions. Working as a cook and gaining experience in several situations may lead to a head chef's position later. You might start as the only chef and head cook in a smaller restaurant. He would in this situation do many of the duties himself instead of training others to do them.

Question 13

Someone who desires to become a chef should possess certain qualities. Choose the 4 most important qualities.

a. Cleanliness

b. Keen sense of hearing

c. Keen sense of taste and smell

d. Ability to work under pressure

e. Physically strong

f. Dislike people

Answers (a), (c), (d), and (e) are the best. A chef must be very clean, strong, and be able to taste and smell well, and be able to work under pressure.

Question 14

Which qualities would most help to make a successful chef? (choose 4)

a. Be a college graduate

b. Have an artistic flair

c. Have good hand and finger coordination

d. Be six feet tall

e. Be creative

f. Have a termperment of patience

Answers (b), (c), (e), (f) are best. Being artistic and creative can help greatly in providing a pleasant atmosphere for dining. Working with a kitchen staff as well as waitresses and the customers requires much patience. The hand-finger coordination is important in all facets of restaurant work.

If you'd like to learn more about a chef and his duties you may like to consult the following sources of information:

National Restaurant Association
Director of Education
1530 Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60601

American Hotel and Motel Association
Director, Educational Institute
888 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10019

American School Food Service Asso.
4101 East Iliff
Denver, Colorado 80222

American Culinary Federation, Inc.
1445 South West Street,
Disneyland Hotel
Anaheim, California 92802

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